



Satellite image with enhanced low cloud-top temperatures (degrees C) for 7:15 a.m. EST (NOAA)

### **Agricultural Weather Highlights - Monday - March 24, 2003**

- ***In the West***, warm, dry weather favors a return to fieldwork in agricultural valleys, following last week's stormy weather pattern. Despite recent improvements in high-elevation snow packs, much of the **West** is forecast to receive below-normal spring and summer runoff, in combination with already low reservoir levels.
- ***On the Plains***, warm, dry weather is promoting rapid winter wheat growth across the **southeastern half of the region**, although local soil moisture shortages persist. Meanwhile, cool weather lingers on the **northern and central High Plains**, where last week's rain and snow boosted topsoil moisture reserves.
- ***In the Corn Belt***, mild, mostly dry weather favors pre-planting fieldwork, following last week's beneficial showers.
- ***In the South***, a few showers linger across **southern Florida**, but warm, dry weather elsewhere is promoting an acceleration of spring fieldwork, including initial corn, cotton, and rice planting in the **Gulf Coast States**.

**Outlook:** During the first half of the week, a slow-moving cold front will bring cooler weather and occasional rain showers to the **Plains, Ohio Valley, and Delta**, while a high-pressure system will maintain mild, dry weather in the **Atlantic Coast States**. Meanwhile, another Pacific storm system will bring unsettled weather to the **Pacific Northwest and northern Rockies**, with precipitation gradually spreading southeastward into the **Great Basin and central Rockies**. Very warm, dry conditions will prevail in the **Southwest**. The NWS 6-10 day outlook for March 29 - April 2 calls for above-normal precipitation in the **Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic States** and portions of the **Pacific Northwest**, while drier-than-normal conditions will prevail in the **Southwest and central and southern portions of the Plains and Mississippi Valley**. Above-normal temperatures are expected in the **Great Basin and Southwest**, while cooler-than-normal weather will prevail in the **eastern half of the U.S.**

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